

National Knowledge Commission

†285. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether 'National Knowledge Commission' has submitted any report recommending improvement in the level of libraries in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's approach thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) (i) Set up a National Commission on Libraries

(ii) Prepare a National Census of all Libraries

(iii) Revamp Library and information science education training and research facilities

(iv) Re-assess staffing of libraries

(v) Set up a Central Library fund

(vi) Modernized Library Management

(vii) Encourage greater community participation in library management

(viii) Promote Information Communication Technology (ICT) applications in all libraries.

(ix) Facilitate donation and maintenance of private collections

(x) Encourage Public-Private Partnership in Libraries and Information Services development

(c) Government have incorporated the formation of a Library Mission in the Eleventh Plan, which will be guided by the report.

Expansion of telephone services

†286. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

[1 March, 2007]

RAJYA SABHA

(a) whether the degree of tele-density has increased due to the rapid expansion of telephone services especially the mobile phone services in the country;

(b) the total number and the percentage of existing telephone connections (basic, wireless and mobile phone respectively) during the year 2006-07; and

(c) the efforts being made by Government for expansion of telephone services and providing calls at cheaper rates to the consumers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir. As on 31-01-2007, (latest available) the tele-density is 17.45 per cent in the country. The teledensity in January 2006 was 11.76 and has been registering a steady growth during the entire year 2006. The increase in teledensity is mainly due to growth in wireless subscribers base.

(b) Total phones are 196.71 million of which landline, Wireless (WLL), Cellular telephones, are 40.32 Million (20.5%), 45.97 Million (23.37%) and 110.41 Million (56.13%) respectively, as on 31.01.2007 (Latest available).

(c) The following efforts are being made for expansion of telephone services and for providing calls at cheaper rates:

- (i) BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited) has restored laying of under ground cable up to 5.00 Kms of telephone exchange for providing telephone connection on land line against the earlier standard of 2.50 Kms.
- (ii) BSNL is deploying WLL (Wireless in Local Loop) network in rural areas to meet the demand of telephone connection beyond 5.00 Kms. of telephone exchange i.e. scattered and far flung rural areas and where telephone connection is not possible on land lines.
- (iii) BSNL is deploying its mobile network to cover gaps in existing coverage and additional requirements based on customer requirements besides covering villages with population 5000 and above. In now planned expansions, BSNL plans to cover villages with population 1000 and above.

- (iv) In addition to the efforts by BSNL, the demand for telephones is also met by the private operators.
- (v) BSNL has introduced many schemes for offering cheaper, competitive and affordable rates to the customers by taking the following steps:
 - (a) Reduction in the tariff for all basic and cellular services.
 - (b) Launch of BSNL ONE INDIA tariff scheme with effect from 01-03-2006, *vide* which a customer can call @ Re 1/-per minute across the country.
 - (c) Reduction in rentals for SULABH PLAN with effect from 01-10-2006.
 - (d) Empowering CGMs of Telecom Circles to launch circle based competitive tariffs for basic and cellular services to face competition effectively.
- (vi) TRAI has taken several initiatives for facilitating growth in telecom services and reduction in tariff. Some of these include introduction of unified access licensing regime, reduction in ADC (Access Deficit Charge) implementation of IUC (Interconnection Usage Charge) regime, recommendation on reduction in licence fee, establishing USO (Universal Service Obligation) fund for provision of telecom services in rural areas etc.
- (vii) Due to the increased competition and various policy/regulatory decision taken by the Government and regulator, the rates for telecom services have been falling. The decline in tariff for mobile, national long distance and international long distance segments has been substantial in recent years. The tariff framework prescribed by TRAI (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India) gives flexibility to the operators to offer tariffs depending of the market condition and other considerations. In areas where competition is perceived to be inadequate the authority continuous to regulate tariffs so as to ensure affordable services to the telecom subscribers. Thus the authority has prescribed tariffs for basic services in rural areas, roaming in cellular mobile services and tariffs for leased circuit [both domestic and IPLC (International Private Leased Circuit)] and thus are presently regulated. The tariffs implemented by vrious operations are closely watched and remedial action is taken as and when

such tariffs exceed the prescribed limits or are violative of the Regulatory Guideline in vogue:

Effects of inadequate radio frequency resources

287. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the DoT has cautioned of inadequate radio frequency resources in the coming months to meet the requirements of GSM operators;

(b) if so, whether this would cause increased congestion leading to call failure or call drops for the consumers; and

(c) whether the DoT has predicted deterioration in call quality and cross connections for the GSM users?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD): (a) to (c) Department of Telecommunications has estimated the requirement of additional radio frequency spectrum for the growth of GSM services to meet the national targets.

To meet the quality of service and to decrease call failure or call drops in the GSM networks, adoption of microcell architecture, additional Base Trans receiver Stations (BTSs), adopting techniques such as installation of Boosters, adequate number of inter operator junctions, interconnection infrastructure, etc. are required, besides necessity for adequate radio frequency spectrum.

Computerisation of post offices in Andhra Pradesh

288. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Post Offices that have been provided with computers in the State of Andhra Pradesh, district-wise;

(b) the details of Post Offices, out of these computerized Post Offices, providing improved services to the customers;